

## *New Finds Reveal Life Here 1960 Years Ago*

By Tony Gieske  
Staff Reporter

Radio-carbon dating of a piece of fire-pit charcoal found last fall at Seneca, Md., by amateur archeologists has established that Indians lived there 1960 years ago, give or take 160 years.

It is the earliest established date of any known human occupation of the Potomac Valley, according to William Tidwell, who supervised the digging. He is chairman of the Southwest Chapter of the Archeological Society of Maryland.

The date places the Indians firmly in the Woodland Period, meaning that they were hunters and fishermen, living in slack times by gleaning berries and nuts from the woods, Tidwell said.

Potholes indicate they lived

in the typical dome-like hut made of bent saplings covered with bark or skins. Pot fragments show net impressions, raising the possibility they fished in the Potomac. Objects resembling net sinkers have been found.

A firm date for the occupation by the Woodland Indians means, too, that a date for the Archaic period Indian occupation of the same site can be set by analogy, at 1000 years earlier. By comparison of cultures, dates of Indian occupation for the entire Potomac Valley can be worked out, Tidwell noted.

The dating was done by the radio-carbon laboratory of the United States Geological Survey under the direction of Meyer Rubin, Tidwell said.